

EXHIBIT 15
to the Declaration of Mara Gassmann



Frontier Services Group founder Erik - South China Morning Post (Hong Kong) - February 2, 2019 - page 3
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Confusion reigned yesterday over whether a unit of Hong Kong-listed security firm Frontier Services Group - founded by Blackwater's **Erik Prince** - had signed a preliminary memorandum to build a training base in China's far western region of Xinjiang.

FSG initially posted a statement on its website announcing that a memorandum was signed on January 11 between one of its units, FSG Security, and the management committee of Caohu Industrial Park in the city of Tumxuk for the construction of a training centre.

The statement also had a photo of a signing ceremony in Beijing.

Prince, FSG's executive director, is a former United States Navy Seal officer and the brother of Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos.

However, a spokesman for **Prince** told Reuters late yesterday that the FSG co-founder had "no knowledge or involvement" concerning a deal in Tumxuk.

"Any potential investment of this nature would require the knowledge and input of each FSG board member and a formal board resolution," the spokesman said in an email.

Prince has been deputy chairman of the board since December 6, according to the company's website.

Citic chairman Chang Zhenming was made FSG board chairman 11 days later.

The statement said the signing ceremony was attended by Citic Group assistant president Luo Ning and officials from several other Citic subsidiaries.

A Hong Kong-based spokesman for FSG told Reuters that the statement was "published in error by a staff member in Beijing" and had been taken off the company's website.

When asked yesterday, the Foreign Ministry's Geng Shuang declined to comment.

Beijing's controls on Xinjiang face increasing international scrutiny, with Western human rights groups reporting that authorities have sent hundreds of thousands of Muslims of the Uyghur minority to re-education camps in the region.

Beijing has said the camps were vocational training facilities.

Prince founded Blackwater in 1997, and the company later won US government contracts to guard American officials and facilities in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was surrounded by controversy in 2007 when its guards were convicted of manslaughter after firing on civilians in Baghdad, and is now defunct.

FSG was founded in 2014. It counts state-owned Citic Group as a major shareholders and has training facilities in Beijing.

In an interview with the state-run tabloid Global Times in 2017, **Prince** rejected suggestions that his company would "help the Chinese government suppressing the Uygurs", saying such claims were "absurd" and "totally fabricated".

"Any claim FSG would provide Blackwater kind of armed security service is absolutely wrong," **Prince** was quoted as saying.

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"Frontier Services Group founder Erik Prince denies knowledge of Xinjiang training base deal." *South China Morning Post (Hong Kong)*, 1 ed., sec. News, 2 Feb. 2019, p. 3. *NewsBank: Access World News*, infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&docref=news/171547CDD46F4320. Accessed 28 Mar. 2022.

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